THE
CATHOLIC RADICAL

"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed." Peter Maurin

October/November 2015 ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

The Duty of Hospitality

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

The photograph of a drowned two-year-old Syrian boy named Aylan Kurdi tugs at our hearts even as the images of mobs of refugees trying to cross borders troubles our heads. While Europe and the United States can certainly accept thousands of refugees, won't that acceptance encourage an overwhelming influx, one that will end up sinking us all? Doesn't there have to be a reasonable limit on hospitality?

The body of two-year-old Aylan Kurdi washed up on the shore of Turkey

With relentless war raging in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, and much of East Africa, accompanied by drought, grinding poverty, and overpopulation, it is not inconceivable that a billion people could try to move their families to the First World. Won't such a transfer cause insurmountable problems? Like the family in a post nuclear war bomb shelter, don't we have a primary responsibility to our own children?

These seem like tough questions, but the answer to all of them is a resounding "No!" From time immemorial, people have excused themselves from the duty of hospitality with the excuse that the needy imperil them and their families. The facts prove otherwise. A September 3, 2015 article by Kenneth Roth, the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, dismisses "apocalyptic rhetoric." Entitled, "The Refugee Crisis That Isn't," it points out that 340,000 refugees trying to enter Europe represents less than 0.068 percent of the EU's population. "This 'wave of people' is more like a trickle when considered against the pool that must absorb it," Roth says.

In 2014, the US accepted 69,926 refugees representing 0.0002 percent of our population. Lebanon, a much smaller and poorer nation, now hosts 1.2 million Syrian refugees representing more than 25 percent of its population. The US accepted only 1,500 Syrian refugees this year. President Obama has proposed increasing that number to 10,000 in 2016. Germany accepted that many in a single day in September.

Bill Frelick, the Director of the Human Rights Watch Refugee Program, says, "Piecemeal approaches have proven ineffective, with deadly consequences. EU leaders should take seriously the

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A Close Call

by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

Had I died that August afternoon, the instrument of my death would have been the branch of a Norway maple. I have always loved the tree which dominates a corner of our small front yard. I love its persistent growth, its cooling canopy in the summer, its outpouring of yellow every November.

The storm that mauled the maple came suddenly. Magnificent, charcoal clouds were banking in the sky as I went to the garden to pluck basil for supper. Through an open window, I could hear my husband Scott talking on the telephone about a tonado watch. Would the tomatoes survive? I wondered. After years of trying to grow them, I finally had plants that promised a decent yield. It would be a pity to lose them in a single afternoon.

Within minutes, a battering rain sent me scurrying to close the car windows. A ferocious wind roared down Mason Street, yanking a branch off the beloved, treacherous maple. It crashed upon our Toyota Prius just as I was fumbling with the ignition to move the car out of harm's way. The massive limb, as big as many a tree trunk, crushed the hood, shattered the front window, and dented the roof. Miraculously, it left me unharmed.

The experience was too quick and too novel for fear. When I realized I was alive beneath the encasement of canopy and windshield, laced with cracks, yet of one piece, I had moments, but only moments, of panic. I scrambled out the back door of the vehicle which Scott had pulled open for me. Outside, I flicked glass dust out of my hair as if it were dandruff.

"Angels are watching over you!" yelled my neighbor Lula, upon seeing me upright and unscathed. And this,

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Vol. 32, No. 2 THE October/November 2015

CATHOLIC RADICAL

Published every two months by:
The Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community
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Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

The Duty of Hospitality

(Continued from Page 1)

need for cooperation, not to maintain Fortress Europe, but to distribute responsibilities fairly and equitably as an expression of solidarity—not just within Europe, but with humanity."

On September 9, the Director of the Florida Council on American Islamic Relations, Hassan Shibly, told WGBH radio, "[Syrian refugees] had to give up everything to seek security. They're not seeking luxuries, the wealth of Europe or the wealth of the US. They're seeking just to be able to sleep at night without the fear of being decapitated by a terrorist group or being blown up by Assad's bombs. Because of that, they have a deep appreciation for life.... I really believe the US and Europe will benefit by having some of the most ingenious and resourceful people contribute positively to society."

Pope Francis, who raised the alarm over the plight of refugees early in his pontificate by visiting the island of Lampedusa, said on September 6, 2015, "In front of the tragedy of tens of thousands of refugees escaping death by war or hunger, on the path towards the hope of life, the Gospel calls us, asks us to be 'neighbors' of the smallest and most abandoned. To this end... I appeal to the parishes, to the religious communities, to the monasteries and sanctuaries of all of Europe to express the concreteness of the Gospel and welcome a family of refugees."

Making his appeal personal, the Pope promised to welcome two refugee families to the Vatican. He counseled us to remember that "Mercy is the second name of Love" and that "**Whatever you did for the leastof these, you did for me"** (Matthew).

German soccer fans demonstrate their support for refugees

For those of us who are Christians, Muslims, or Jews, hospitality is more than a duty. It is a privilege, an encounter with angels in disguise. All three monotheistic traditions are anchored in the decision of the Patriarch Abraham to welcome three strangers. Without that act of hospitality, there never would have been the miraculous birth of Sarah and Abraham's son. The children of Abraham, as Christians, Muslims, and Jews see themselves, would not exist. For us, all salvation history depends on hospitality.

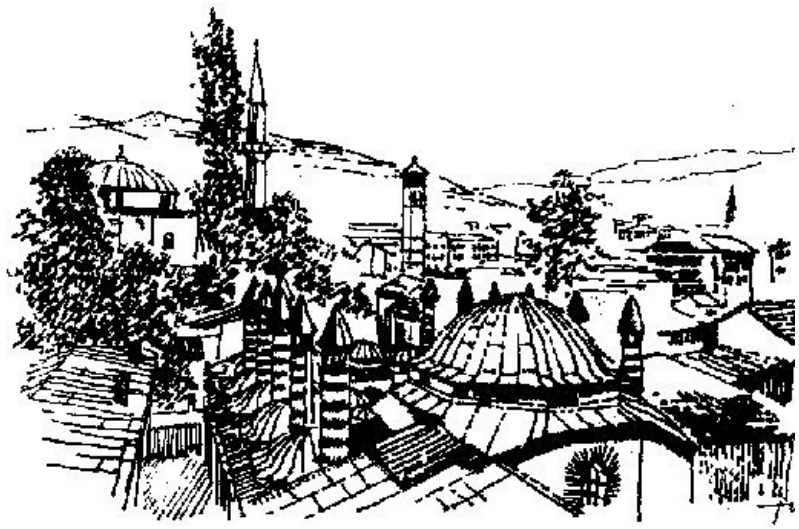
The cultural acceptance of hospitality remains the strongest in the Muslim world, where rejecting those in need is still seen as disgraceful. But even there, the tradition of hospitality is under threat. In Afghanistan and Iraq, various combatants have abused the privilege in order to carry out sneak attacks on their enemies.

For those of us who profess Christianity, though, the duty of hospitality supersedes even the risk of death. The Gospel calls us to love everyone, including those who hate and persecute us, no matter the cost. When Jesus set the example of giving His own life on the Cross and we saw how death did not have the last word, our excuses for not being hospitable melted away.

While four million Syrians have fled from their country, the United States has accepted only 0.03 percent of them. Given the enormous responsibility the US bears for the turmoil in the Middle East, our lack of hospitality for refugees is shameful.

We need to press the government to open our doors wider and then challenge ourselves to host as many people as we can. Americans have done it before. After World War II and the war in Vietnam, we accepted hundreds of thousands of refugees. We can do it again. We must utterly reject arguments against hospitality for those in such dire need. Pope Francis is absolutely right: "Mercy is another name for Love." Refugees need our love right now. Ω

Editor's Note: On September 3, 2015, The Wall Street Journal *published an article disputing statements made by Aylan Kurdi's father, raising questions about whether or not he might have been to blame for the toddler's drowning. While we support fact checking, we reject the cynical view of anyone outside of Syria questioning how far parents should go to provide a better life for themselves and their children.*



Dr. Tuna Alp

Lost Details

By Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

Editor's Note: This poem was inspired by Calire's visit to a war-ravaged Bosnian town in 1999..

> Our home is an empty place. We who are left behind are like wild animals. All we can do is cry out and cry out.
>
> *– Bosnian war refugee*

There was no proportionality to the destruction, the whole town gone in a matter of hours. What had stood for decades, even centuries, was blown up in a single afternoon. How quickly the walls of the ancient mosque disintegrated into rubble, the hollow dome of its sanctuary, holding echoes o*f Allah Akbar*, imploding into a permanent silence. The toppled minaret still lies pointless on the courtyard.

Buildings, like people, harbor histories and take years to become what they are. Yet none of this was recognized on the afternoon the soldiers destroyed houses. It did not matter that his father's grandfather had the place when he was young, or that he had just repaired its southern wall, hauling the stones from the quarry himself to prove to her the stoop in his shoulder was only an illusion. Thirty years ago, she had seen him there swooping down toward the water in a summertime dive. The arc of his back had made her gasp. "You are like a bird," she had said.

The soldiers did not know the man's story. They did not know the rocks that lined the southern wall were dragged there for memory's sake. Who had time for such details amid the rush of endings that day? A spray of bullets, and his shoulder was shattered. Two tromblon mines placed beneath the ceiling light in his living room, and the fragments of his red tile roof were spinning
high into the sky. Ω

Easy Essays

by Peter Maurin

1933-The Catholic Worker

The aim of the Catholic Worker
is to create order out of chaos.
The aim of the Catholic Worker
is to help the unemployed
to employ themselves.
The aim of the Catholic Worker
is to make an impression
on the depression
through expression.
The aim of the Catholic Worker
is to create a new society
within the shell of the old
with the philosophy of the new.
which is not a new philosophy.
but a very old philosophy,
a philosophy so old
that it looks like new. Ω

Blowing the Dynamite

Writing about the Catholic Church,
a radical writer says:
"Rome will have to do more
than to play a waiting game;
she will have to use
some of the dynamite
inherent in her message."
To blow the dynamite
of a message
is the only way
to make the message dynamic.
If the Catholic Church is not today
the dominant social dynamic force,
it is because Catholic scholars
have failed to blow the dynamite
of the Church.
Catholic scholars
have taken the dynamite of the Church,
have wrapped it up
in nice phraseology,
placed it in an hermetic container
and sat on the lid.
It is about time
to blow the lid off
so the Catholic Church
may again become
the dominant social dynamic force. Ω

Can Catholic Parishes Be Radical?

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

Despite the prominent display of Christ crucified in every Catholic church, the predominant theme of most homilies demands much smaller sacrifice from those in the pews. Rather than being radical — going to the roots of our faith — parishes tend to be either liberal or conservative, reflecting the trends of the day or those of the recent past. When a crisis arises, the likelihood of a parish responding in a counter-cultural way is low. After the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, most parishes hereabouts responded with yellow ribbons and prayers for US troops in Afghanistan and, later on, in Iraq. Christ's command to love the enemy was not front and center. Prayers for the safety of our troops continued long after it became clear that they had killed many tens of thousands of civilians. I never heard a parish offer a prayer for Osama bin Ladin. And when he was murdered by US soldiers, Catholic students at my alma mater, Holy Cross College, marched around campus chanting, "USA! USA!" and singing, "We Are the Champions." Did they never hear a homily on turning the other cheek? If so, it did not make a very big impression.

But yesterday, I went to Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church, four blocks from Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker, and found a stack of cards announcing that the Knights of Columbus had declared September 11th a World Day of Prayer for Peace. The card featured the following prayer Pope Benedict XVI offered at Ground Zero in New York City on April 20, 2008:

God of peace, bring your peace to our violent world: peace in the hearts of all men and women and peace among the nations of the earth. Turn to your way of love those whose hearts and minds are consumed with hatred. God of understanding, overwhelmed by the magnitude of this tragedy, we seek your light and guidance as we confront such terrible events. Grant that those whose lives were spared may live so that the live lost may not have been lost in vain. Comfort and console us, strengthen us in hope, and give us the wisdom and courage to work tirelessly for a world where true peace and love reign among nations and in the hearts of all."

The Gospel reading from Saint Mark centered around Jesus' words: "**Whoever wishes to come after me must deny themself, take up their cross, and follow me.**" All the hymns, especially "How Can I Keep From Singing," reinforced the duty of sacrifice as well as its rewards.

From my seat in the back of the

church, I could also hear the mutterings of a homeless man in the church vestibule. He is someone who stayed with us on numerous occasions and was often difficult, but the pastor of Blessed Sacrament refuses to have the police remove him, and the church janitor gives him food.

On the bulletin board in the vestibule, I saw an appeal for parishioners to cook a meal one day a month at our sister community, the Mustard Seed Catholic Worker. This ministry is taken up by a dozen congregations. Soccer moms and dads from the suburbs come in their mini vans and, like Francis of Assisi, they serve the poor personally. A group of students from Assumption College wants to cook a meal once a month at Saints Francis and Thérèse house. Both Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, who founded the Catholic Worker, believed strongly in the power of bringing the rich and poor together.

Two weeks before my visit to Blessed Sacrament, I was at Saint Susanna's in Dedham and learned how that parish had raised the funds to put enough solar panels on the rectory roof to cover most of the church's energy needs. When one considers Yale University professor Timothy Snyder's argument that "the conflict in Syria was brought about by climate change: five years of unbearable drought," trying to be carbon-neutral is a radical witness for peace.

Saint Susanna's has long given ten percent of its weekly collection to various causes, as does Saint Luke's in Westborough, Saint Mary's in Milford, and many other parishes. Despite the fact that tithing plunged Saint Luke's into debt, the parish wants to continue giving.

And then, I couldn't help but remember how Father Tim Brewer preached at Our Lady of the Lake Church in Leomister on love of enemies only two weeks after September 11th. His homily was so powerful, we reprinted it in its entirety in *The Catholic Radical*.

Shortly thereafter, Brenna Cussen convinced Bishop Daniel Reilly to celebrate a Mass for Peace in Worcester's cathedral on September 11, 2002 and again in 2003. The Mustard Seed's chaplain, Father Bernie Gilgun, of blessed memory, preached at both Masses.

Saint John's in Worcester feeds over a hundred people each morning and shelters homeless men in the rectory. Saint Patrick's church in Washington, DC, where Claire and I were married, keeps its doors unlocked despite the fact that some homeless people have used the confessionals as bathrooms. Pope Francis, undoubtedly because of Saint Patrick's openness to the poor, chose to visit it rather than attend a fancy lunch.

In the face of any calamity, there is pressure from the media and political demagogues to respond in fear and violence, but it's far better to take a breath and "seek light and guidance" from our deepest roots. Armed with those values, we can do what is right heedless of its popularity or cost. Ω

Close Call

(Continued from Page 1)

along with, "Thank God, you are alive," became the refrain of the afternoon from neighbors and passers-by alike. The catastrophic scene very quickly became a scene of spontaneous gratitude as people realized the woman in the smashed car was unharmed. The curly-headed youth strolling down the street, the burly, tattooed man in a beat-up car, the women who stopped to take photos with their cell phones, even the harried men from the city, hauling loud, buzzing saws to remove the limb and wearing hearing protective earmuffs, all marveled my life had been spared.

"You need to pray," a man with a thick eastern European accent said minutes after I came out from under the crushing limb. Thinking he said, "You needed to brake," I started to explain how I tried to put the car in reverse, but could not do so in time. "No, no. You need to *pray*," he repeated. And I did, in my heart, out loud, and with Reverend Dyer, Lula's husband. Standing on the street with hand on my shoulder, the two of us less than twenty feet from the accident, he thanked "the Father Who watches over us," while men with saws and women with brooms worked to clear the road of the fallen tree.

Catholic Free Press photo of our neighbor Sadie Walker hugging Claire

Many of us nearly die before we finally do. My good friend David survived an accident in which his vehicle rolled off the interstate and into a ravine. Other friends and loved ones have lived through equally hazardous situations: Car crashes. A near drowning. Getting electrocuted, or struck by lightning. Our guest Ross described his near death experience as being homeless for the first time. He lost his job, his apartment, his sense of self-worth. He felt his life was disappearing beneath circumstances beyond control, as if he were becoming invisible.

My own brushes with death, prior to the maple, include an assault by a psychotic woman, a car crash, bus rides in India in which the driver grazed oncoming vehicles, and a collapse on a crowded train a few feet away from its open door.

Elation or trauma often follow these occasions of near misses. I experienced both after my encounter with the falling tree. My dominant reaction has been gratitude. For days after the accident, I walked around in a state of happiness that almost rivaled the bliss I felt after each of my children were born. Shabby, monotonously familiar streets in Worcester appeared delightful. Mundane tasks were occasions to celebrate. *Look, Claire, you are still here and able to sweep the front porch. Hooray!* The euphoria has subsided, but there are moments, even in the middle of a difficult day, when I get a down-in-the-bone gladness for the gift of being alive.

"**Be opened**," Christ said as he touched the deaf man's ear to heal him. Instead of a touch, I received a thwack, yet the message is the same: be opened.

It was a particular wind that blew on that August afternoon. Ferocious and unrelenting in the front of the house, it barely ruffled the backyard garden. The tomatoes survived. Ross, along with the rest of us, is enjoying them immensely. Ω

Editor's Note: Miraculously, only a week after this disaster, family, friends, and supporters helped us buy another Prius to replace the one that was crushed.

Georges St. Pierre

Handyman

by Barton Sutter

The morning brought such a lashing rain
I decided I might as well stay inside
And tackled those jobs that had multiplied
Like an old man's minor aches and pain.

I found a screw for the strikerplate,
Tightened the handle on the bathroom door,
Cleared the drain in the basement floor,
And straightened the hinge for the backyard gate.

Each task had been a nagging distraction,
An itch in the mind, a dangling thread;
Knocking a tiny brass brad on the head,
I felt an insane sense of satisfaction.

Then I heard a great crash in the yard.
The maple had fallen and smashed our car. Ω

From "Writer's Almanac"
August 6, 2015

Welcome Morning

by Anne Sexton

There is joy
in all:
in the hair I brush each morning,
in the Cannon towel, newly washed,
that I rub my body with each morning,
in the chapel of eggs I cook
each morning,
in the outcry from the kettle
that heats my coffee
each morning,
in the spoon and the chair
that cry "hello there, Anne"
each morning,
in the godhead of the table
that I set my silver, plate, cup upon
each morning.

All this is God,
right here in my pea-green house
each morning
and I mean,
though often forget,
to give thanks,
to faint down by the kitchen table
in a prayer of rejoicing
as the holy birds at the kitchen window
peck into their marriage of seeds.

So while I think of it,
let me paint a thank-you on my palm
for this God, this laughter of the morning,
lest it go unspoken.

The Joy that isn't shared, I've heard,
dies young. Ω

"I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center."

Kurt Vonnegut

Nothing Is Impossible

Lyck

"They say nothing is impossible, but I do it every day."

Winnie the Pooh

By December 2015 or early 2016, **Nothing Is Impossible:** ***Stories from the Life of a Catholic Worker*** by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy will be in print.

After reading the manuscript, David O'Brien, author, retired professor of Catholic American History at the College of the Holy Cross, gives this review:

Catholic Worker Scott Schaeffer-Duffy presents a uniquely engaging memoir of his life of voluntary poverty, hospitality for the homeless, nonviolent peacemaking, civil disobedience, jail time and, amazingly, marriage and parenthood. He and his friends, he tells us, are "ordinary people who take leaps of faith." He writes only a bit about the Catholic Christian faith, which is the thread that informs the book and Scott's life. He prefers stories and is a gifted story teller. His are always interesting, told with a self-deprecating humor that lifts them above most memoirs of do-gooders. There are chapters on meals with homeless guests of all sorts, travel to war zones, arguments in contentious courtrooms, inter-personal exchanges in prisons, road races and marathons with competitors and his remarkable partner, Claire, and solving mysteries and climbing mountains with his children.

Pope Francis speaks of "the joy of the Gospel" and Schaeffer-Duffy's inspiration, Dorothy Day referred to "the duty of delight." Both terms come from holy persons who thought the Gospel mandated option for the poor is good news, a way to happiness. Schaeffer-Duffy's stories, told without even a touch of condescension and only a little naive idealism, bring that idea to life. Here is a book about peace and social justice, about truthfulness and most of all love, that readers will find challenging but will also enjoy. It is hard to think of a book by an activist about things that matter that will make readers smile as well as think.

More reviews, photos, and excerpts from the book can be found at the *www.nothingisimpossiblebook.com*.

The approximately 275-page book with more than 60 color photos will retail for $25, but can be advanced ordered now for $20 (plus $3.20 Massachusetts sales tax). Scott is working with a wonderful publisher, Marcia Gagliardi, at Haley's Book Publishing in Athol, Massachusetts, who is as excited about the project as Scott is, but neither has the cash on hand to pay the final costs of this project. Advance sales are a huge help. With a bit of luck, the book will be ready in time for Christmas.

If you are interested, please send your contact information and a check for $23.20 made out to "Scott Schaeffer-Duffy" to 52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610. An autographed copy will be mailed to you as soon as it is available. Ordering can also be done by PayPal on the website. Thanks so much! Ω

Letters

Dear Scott, Claire, family, friends, guests, and community members,

Thanks for another *Radical*. And, boy, is it a good one. I love the positive flavor of it—incorporating love for all of God's creation—people both "good" and "bad," and the planet. I loved the "Worthwhile Video Game" article too.

Cultural diversity has been a recurring topic for me this month. My father and husband don't believe in any culture other than the "teachings of Jesus." Whereas I find diversity of cultures like diversity of flowers. The differences enhance the beauty of God's creation. I was recently given a Cherokee CD. Listening to it helped me realize I'm not a freak—just a Cherokee who grew up devoid of my culture. My resonance with Maori culture is perfectly understandable.

Getting back to the *Radical* and emphasis on lifestyle choices to love the planet—I'm constantly trying to balance love of the planet with love of people.... It's a balancing act! But give and take—fine tuning constantly is part of what keeps us on our toes and questioning ourselves to be true to the more loving response all around.

The Californians applauding after fifteen minutes of rain reminded me of parts of Australia. One of my grand nieces was three or four before she first experienced rain!

Sheri Ellery
Opononi, New Zealand

Mason Street Quotes

"This is the first time I've lived in a hippie house. It's kind of nice."

Stephen

When Andrew asked Claire how the vacuum cleaner he gave her was working, she said, "It doesn't get down low enough for our wood floors and short-haired carpet."

He replied, "Maybe that's because I ran over a rat with it."

Labor News

On August 27, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled parent companies are equally responsible for violations of labor laws by subcontractors. This decision is particularly relevant to employees of fast-food franchises and the construction industry which routinely subcontracts work to companies that under-pay or even fail to pay workers altogether. In the latter case, when workers demand their wages, the subcontractor vanishes and the main contractor denies responsibility. In 2014, numerous construction workers had their wages stolen in this fashion after working for months in bitter winter weather at the Botany Bay housing development off June Street in Worcester. For the common sense protection of workers' rights, the NLRB closed a major loophole.

On September 14, Republican presidential hopeful Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker said that if he was elected he would "drain the swamp which is Washington" and achieve this largely by severely weakening unions, eliminating overtime pay, and abolishing the NLRB. Interestingly, on that same day, a study was released concluding that the economic policies of all the Republican candidates would be most beneficial to the top one percent of all wage earners, widening the wealth gap significantly.

As Catholic Worker personalists and pacifists, we part company with most parties, but cannot help but be especially horrified by the prevailing Republican rhetoric. Ω

Catholic Worker Calendar

October 7, 21 November 4 — Mass or Evening Prayer: Come join us in prayer, song, and Taizé chanting at 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street. Followed by refreshments.

Dan Burke by Travis Simpkin

October 14 — A Night with Dan Burke: Don't miss the chance to hear one of Worcester's most talented musicians perform close up and personal. Be prepared to sing as well. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street. Followed by refreshments.

October 16-18 — 30th Annual New England Regional Gathering of War Tax Resisters and Supporters: Please come to Amherst, Massachusetts to attend a weekend of encouragement for those who refuse to pay for war. A Friday evening presentation by Frida Berrigan, from 7:30-9:15 P.M. is open to the public without registration. For those interested in registering for the entire weekend contact Daniel Sicken: dhsicken@yahoo.com/ 802 387-2798.

October 28 — Readings from *Nothing Is Impossible*: Come hear Scott Schaeffer-Duffy read selections from his upcoming book. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street. Followed by refreshments.

Mason Street Musings

What can I tell you about the Ghost Soldier of Jesus Christ, our neighborhood squatter? He moved into one of the two abandoned houses on Mason Court in mid-summer. The properties had become a source of worry for us because addicts were using them to shoot up. One evening, our son Aiden, delivering farm vegetables to the neighbors, saw our soldier in the back of the Court, so I went to investigate. He and a middle-aged woman, stoop-shouldered and stout, were sweeping and bagging trash that had accumulated around the abandoned houses.

Giddy at the sight of people trying to improve the neighborhood, I chatted him up and told of our concerns about the addicts frequenting the properties to get high. Oh, he had known that way of life years ago, he told me. But he was a Ghost Soldier of Jesus Christ now. If he ever caught someone using, why he'd beat them with a baseball bat.

"No need for that," I said.

Several nights later, the woman, who spoke only Spanish, showed up at the back door with the pastor from the Church of the Miracles. They had hopes of buying the house, which has been condemned, but the project proved beyond their means. The woman is gone. Our Ghost Soldier remains, coming and going at odd hours to avoid being seen by the police. Apparently, they know him well.

We have been warned our new arrival steals, and yes, a raincoat and shopping bags went missing from our hallway after he arrived. We don't begrudge him these given his circumstance. Initially wary, my neighbor Elizabeth now seems glad for his presence for the Ghost Soldier of Jesus Christ is quite industrious. He has repaired

Grace Sliwoski

the back fence and cleared brush off Elizabeth's roof. Such a man is a godsend for her, a widow in her senior years.

Jamaicans, Iraqis, and Filipinos moved onto Mason Court recently, joining the Vietnamese and Ghanaians who have lived here for years. In the heat of summer, we kept our windows opened, and I often fell asleep listening to the chatter of several languages.

Inside the house is no less international. Three continents are often represented at the supper table. For more than a month, we hosted a man from Liberia. He pressed his shirts and pants each morning and spoke in a thick, almost indecipherable accent. W. kept reminding us he was a highly educated person who should have been the mayor, by now. The rules of the house certainly did not apply to him. After too many infractions, we had to ask him to pack his things. "When I become President of the US, you will be sorry," he told us. I felt for him as he walked out of the house that morning in button shirt and creased pants, hauling his belongings in a plastic trash bag.

We are now navigating the rapids of September. Scott is coaching his largest cross-country team ever at a local high school. His commitment, his witness of presence to these youth, many of them quite poor, is remarkable. I continue to assist the Center for Nonviolent Solutions, a small organization working to provide peace education for young people. This month, we are hosting veteran peace educators, MJ and Jerry Park for a training in nonviolence education and a talk with award-winning disarmament expert Dr. Paul F. Walker. In between the two events, I am driving to Washington DC to catch a glimpse of the pope.

Thanks to all who make possible this varied life of ours with your prayers, donations, and encouraging words. "God is good," our neighbors will say, to which another adds, "all the time." This is true. Ω

Claire

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